REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are all the claims pending in the application. The claims remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anabuki et al. (hereinafter "Anabuki") (U.S. Patent No. 6,441,913) in view of Smith et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,999,710) for the same reasons as in the February 14, 2004 Office Action. However, the Examiner has withdrawn the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejections of the claims.

In this Office Action, the Examiner provides a rebuttal of Applicants' arguments provided in the May 13, 2004 Amendment. First, the Examiner states that the reading buffer 27 is a reading buffer for printing and not a reading buffer for expansion as claimed in claim 3. Applicants respectfully traverse this assertion. Applicants submit that a reading buffer for expansion as recited in claim 3 corresponds to a reading buffer for expansion 29 in the embodiment. The function of this buffer is described in page 13 of the specification. In some expanding methods, an expander has to refer to data which is already expanded by the expander to expand the following compressed data. In such a case, the reading buffer for expansion 29 is provided to feedback the expanded data to the expander. Thus, Applicants submit that the reading buffer for expansion is proper claim terminology.

Further, to more clearly define the invention, Applicants have amended the claims to recite a feature wherein said image data supply means is controlled so as to be synchronized with the print engine. This feature is described, for example, in page 13, lines 2 to 14 of the present specification. As described in the specification, the related art type image processor is required to execute all image processing depending upon the printing timing of the print engine. To solve

this problem, the present invention provides the expanded image memory and the image data supply means. With this arrangement, the timing of expansion by the expander and the timing when the image data supply means supplies expanded image to the print engine can be selectively controlled (for example, see page 14, lines 7 to 12). Further, in order to drive the print engine, the image data supply means may be synchronized with the print engine.

Anabuki discloses an image processing apparatus which outputs processed image data to an output device 9 which may be a printer or a display. The image processing apparatus of Anabuki is not an apparatus which is installed inside a printer and connected to a print engine. That is, the combining portion 7 of Anabuki is not synchronized with the print engine of the printer in order to drive the print engine. Nor is there a suggestion concerning a synchronization between the combining portion 7 and the print engine of the printer in Anabuki. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claims distinguish over the cited art, and request that the application be passed to issue as quickly as possible.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue

Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any

overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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